

***More than \$500 million in taxpayer money has been paid to convicted politicians during last decade***

Washington, DC - Congressman John Adler announced a new bipartisan bill today to protect taxpayer dollars and hold corrupt federal officials accountable for abusing their office. On a conference call with reporters, Congressman Adler highlighted the growing number of federal officials convicted of corruption and the heavy price tag their pensions place on American taxpayers.

"Hard-working American taxpayers should not foot the bill to support public officials convicted of breaking the law," Congressman Adler said. "With corruption rampant in Washington and Trenton, it is no wonder Americans do not trust government officials. They must be expected to follow the rules, or suffer the consequences. I will continue to fight to remove this type of inexcusable waste and abuse from our government."

**Corruption in the United States:**

- Over the past decade, 10,475 public officials have been charged with public corruption and more than 9,350 have been convicted. In 2008, 458 federal officials were convicted of public corruption, a steady increase from the 381 convictions achieved in 2004.
- The FBI reports an increase of more than 50 percent in public corruption cases since 2003. In the past five years, the number of agents working public corruption cases also increased by more than 50 percent.
- The United States government paid over \$573 million in pension payments from 1999 - 2008 to public officials convicted of felonies connected to their office duties.

Under current law, public officials convicted of corruption will still receive their pension - retirement support paid for by the American people.

For example, in 2008, a former special agent with the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Inspector General (OIG), was sentenced for the theft of more than \$1 million. On three occasions, Scott Allen Gompert prepared fraudulent seizure warrants, featuring the forged signatures of United States magistrate judges, and presented the warrants to federally-insured financial institutions. Using this scheme, he amassed \$1,109,159 and was eventually sentenced to 26 months of imprisonment followed by three years of supervised release and a \$5,000 fine. Mr. Gompert is still eligible for his retirement pension.

**The Public Corruption Elimination Act:**

Congressman Adler announced today a new bipartisan bill, cosponsored by Congressman Chris Lee (R-NY), which will increase the types of crimes eligible for pension forfeiture to include: bribery, graft, misappropriation of public funds or property, or conflicts of interest that occurred in connection with the individual's service as an employee.

The Public Corruption Elimination Act will apply to federal employees, defined as someone appointed to their position in the civil service by the President, Uniformed Services, Members of Congress or the head of a government controlled corporation. If a federal employee is convicted of a federal or state felony that includes any of the before mentioned charges, they will have to forfeit their pension.

Congressman Adler introduced a similar bill in New Jersey, while serving in the state senate, which was signed into law. Additional examples of convicted public officials still receiving a federal pension are available on request.